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No. 7.

Maine Farmer

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S. L. BOARDMAN, Editor.

Our Home, our Country and our Brother Man.

The Season and Crops of 1870.—III.

The Lessons of the Season.

Each season as it passes, is marked by its own peculiar characteristics; and each, too, has its lessons of instruction and sounds its notes of warning. If the farmer would be wise in his chosen calling, he should study those lessons carefully, and treasure up these instructions, while at the same time he guards the warnings. The season that has just passed has been characterized by a drought unprecedented in duration, severity and extent. All of New England, and nearly all of the Northern and Western States have felt its severity, while at the same time it has extended three thousand miles across the ocean, and been severely felt in Great Britain, and was without precedent in its severity on the Continent.

A drought extending over so vast an extent of territory at the same time has seldom been recorded, 1870, may, with as much propriety, be designated as the dry season, as 1816 has been called the cold season. In this country it has not cut off to any alarming extent any of the farm products. Want or distress will not prevail to any extent on that account.

If the farmer heeds the lessons which the peculiarities of the season has taught, he will learn that thorough drainage overcomes in a great measure the damaging effects of drought.

Wet lands underdrained are completely saturated with moisture in the spring time. When the dry weather comes on, the moisture is evaporated, leaving the soil completely parched.

While in this condition it is impervious to all effects of the atmosphere existing at all times in the atmosphere, and is at the same time incapable of facilitating the attraction of the moisture from below. During a drought such lands are not wanting in moisture at all, the soil is in a condition to appropriate it. Drain them, and all excess of water in the wet season is carried off, and the land is left friable and light; so that whether wet or dry these lands contain moisture enough, and soon enough to ensure the growth of the crops.

The soil holds enough for the use of the plants—only the excess is carried off by the drainage.

Lands saturated with water are cold and backward—cold because the heat is largely taken up or rendered latent in evaporating the water—backward because the soil is too cold to give the young plants a vigorous and healthy start.

When the water is carried off by drains, the heat, which otherwise would have been required to evaporate it, acts upon the soil, and gives the plants an early and vigorous start,

pushing its roots far and deep into the soil.

Deep and thorough pulverization counteracts the damaging effects of drought. Lands worked deep and thoroughly pulverized as deep as worked, have in all instances produced more than average yields of all farm crops, with the single exception perhaps of hay. The power of capillary attraction is immensely increased by pulverization. While it absorbs all the moisture which comes in contact with the surface and conducts it to the roots of the plants, finding a mellow bed, run deep down into the moist soil, and are not parched and burned by the scorching rays of the sun, while the heat and air penetrate and warm the soil to any needed depth.

Frequent stirring and thorough loosening of the soil contribute much towards keeping up a supply of moisture. Finely pulverized soil radiates heat much faster than if parched; therefore it cools much quicker. It is known by all that dew is most freely deposited on those surfaces which are cooler than the surrounding atmosphere. It follows then that a soil well pulverized will have a much larger amount of dew deposited upon its surface than it will when hard and compact.

Lands well drained, either naturally or artificially, worked deep, finely pulverized, frequently stirred, kept free from weeds, and liberally manured, will produce paying crops any year, whether wet or dry. If a farmer has a few acres of land whose natural condition is just right, he should direct the principal efforts and apply the principal part of his manures to a few acres, when he can get abundantly remunerated therefor. If those acres are too limited, gradually extend them by putting other acres in just that condition. Don't work poor lands year after year, for almost nothing, when there is enough good land to make us all rich if we work wisely and well.

American Journal of Science and Art.

With the present year this work, heretofore issued quarterly, entered upon new series, and will henceforth continue to be issued monthly. This change, while tending to render the work somewhat more popular, will give a more ready means for intercommunication among scientific men, and we believe the change in its mode of publication will be generally satisfactory. It will, moreover, still maintain the distinctive features, which for the past fifty years have given the work so elevated a character in matters of natural science. Among the articles of more general interest in the January number are On the Post-tertiary of the New Haven Region; Meteors of November, 1870; The Earthquake of Oct. 29th, 1870 in North Eastern America, and eighteen pages of Scientific Intelligence. Terms \$6.00 per year, 50 cents per number. Address Messrs. Dana & Stillman, New Haven, Conn.

Answer to Inquiry.

In reply to the committee of correspondence of the Paradise (N. S.) Agricultural Society, Messrs. Abner Longley and William L. Lyndon, who inquire if a thoroughbred Lyronehill bull can be procured in Maine, we are anxious that such an animal as the Society wishes to procure can undoubtedly be obtained by Messrs. J. & N. Dana, Jr., Kennebunk, the most prominent breeders of Ayrshires in this State, and who have been constant exhibitors and high winners at the fairs of the State Agricultural and New England Agricultural Societies, during past years. They are gentlemen of high character and reputation, and their animals have all herd-book pedigree. In their letter the committee says: "There are two cheese factories within the circle of our Society, hence the preference given to the Ayrshire blood. I may add that we have had the services of a superior thoroughbred Ayrshire bull in connection with our Society for some three years past, and are desirous of continuing on the line first adopted."

Circular of the Cattle Commissioners.

As stated in our last week's issue we have, by leave before our readers the circular of the Cattle Commissioners of Maine, relating to the contagious "Foot and Mouth Disease," with which our State is seriously threatened, even if it does not already exist in a latent form, within our borders. It was found, considering the necessity for prompt action, that the act of 1862, was sufficiently complete in its provisions to meet the present exigency, rather than to wait for the somewhat slow course of new legislation upon the matter. The Commissioners are S. L. Goodale, Safo, Joseph Percival, Waterville, and J. C. Weston, Bangor, either of whom may be notified or consulted upon the subject.

Circulars.

To whom it may concern, including city and town authorities, common carriers, cattle drivers, and all others.

The undersigned, respectively appointed by the State Board of Commissioners on Contagious Diseases in cattle, under the state regulations thereto, approved March 19, 1862, hereby announce to the Mayor and Aldermen of cities and the Selectmen of towns, to all commissioners, carriers, and others, that the highly contagious disease aforesaid, known as "Encephalitis Epizootica," or Foot and Mouth Disease, has been introduced into this country from Europe, by way of Canada, of which many cases exist in New York. Considerable alarm exists in the Hamptons, and it is spreading rapidly.

There is also reason to believe that it already exists in a latent form, or may be soon manifested into disease.

This disease is a most fatal, but where it has been spread it is spreaded fully as much as Pleuro Pneumonia, because of its rapid spread and speedily prostrating effects.

It is the most contagious disease known among cattle, having manifested with great facility and rapidity, and it attacks all classes of animals, or with any object which has been contaminated by them, or by being placed in yards or conveyed in cars previously occupied by such ones, or by being driven over roads previously trodden by such animals.

Its spread is also manifested by clothing of individuals who have come in contact with the disease.

In view of these facts we urge upon the municipal authorities of all cities and towns in this State, that, should occasion arise, they should immediately prohibit the sale of all public lands for the year 1862, according to the spirit and intent thereof, and that the same be enforced.

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The Maine Farmer: An Agricultural and Family Newspaper.

Maine Farmer.

Augusta, January 21, 1870.

TERMS OF THE MAINE FARMER.

\$2.00 in advance, or \$2.50 not paid within Three Months of the date of Subscription.

All payments made by subscribers will be credited on the yellow slips attached to their papers. The printed date in connection with the subscriber's name will be the time to which he has paid, and will constitute, in all cases, a valid receipt for money's worth.

If a subscriber desiring to change the post office address of his paper must communicate to us the name of the office to which it has been previously sent, otherwise we shall be unable to comply with his request.

Collectors' Notices.

Mr. S. N. Tabor will canvass the county of Waldo during the month of January.

Mr. V. DARLING is now canvassing Lincoln county.

Amanding the State Constitution.

Hon. C. J. Morris, Senator from Cumberland County, has offered a number of important amendments to the Constitution of Maine. The amendments heretofore made are comprised in twelve articles, and Mr. Morris proposes to add four more articles. The following is a summary of their provisions:

Article XI.

The Legislature shall make no irrevocable grants of special privileges or immunities. Bills shall be read at large, and shall be printed with all amendments before final passage. The vote shall be by yeas and nays on each bill separately, and the same shall become a law without the consent of either house.

No bill shall become a law without the consent of both houses, or that shall be enacted into law in its title, and no law shall be revised or amended by reference to its title merely.

Sec. 1. Pay for legislators fixed at \$150, with ten cents per mile travelled, and \$50 for postage, stationery, &c., all other allowances and perquisites being forbidden. Legislature may change the pay, but not for the term for which it is elected.

Sec. 2. Legislature shall not grant extra compensation to any public servant after the service has been rendered, nor authorize the payment of any claim created against the State without express sanction of law, expenses for superfluous instruction or repairing invasion excepted.

Sec. 3. State printing, stationery and fuel to be let to lowest bidder, no member of legislature or other State officer to be interested.

No member of legislature to be interested in books or apparatus, &c.

Sec. 5. Legislature shall prohibit lotteries and gift enterprises.

Sec. 6. Legislature shall not pass laws or regulations relating to the sale of distilled liquors; change of names, roads, locations, or changing county seats; country and township affairs; practice in courts of justice; jurisdiction and duties of justices of the peace, police magistrates, coroner, inquestmen, coroner's inquests, coroners, inquests, management of common schools; interest; place and manner of elections; sale or mortgage of real estate belonging to minors or others under disability; protection of minors; changing fees or allowances of public officers during the term for which said officers are to hold; changing the law of descent; granting the right to lay railroad tracks; granting any special or exclusive privilege, or that may interfere with the general law in any case, where a general law can be made applicable.

Sec. 7. Legislature shall not release the liability of any corporation or individual to the State or to any person.

Article XV.

The public readings given on Friday evening last at Meenin Hall by Rev. Francis T. Russell, in aid of the Lambard Home for Aged and Indigent Women, was well attended, showing a very gratifying interest on the part of our people in the objects of this excellent institution.

The readings consisted of the usual familiar selections from Tennyson, Poe, Dickens, Sam Lover, and Shakespeare, and were given with great interest by the committee.

Sec. 4. Legislature shall not grant right to construct a street railroad, without consent of the local authorities having control of the street.

Sec. 5. Provides for the transaction of the business of state, in such a way as to insure public and impartial trial of causes. Directors shall report annually to the Secretary of State.

Sec. 6. Movables property of railroads shall be considered personal property and liable to taxation.

Sec. 7. Ladies' Benevolent Society meets at Mrs. John Dorr's, on Summer street; every alternate Thursday afternoon, to work for the destitute poor of the town. They find many who are not able, but will be able to supply their wants, unless people will come to their aid with contributions of their cast-off clothing, and such other things as they can spare from their abundance. We have no doubt there are many families whose attire are stoned with cast-off garments sufficient to comfortably cloth a dozen families. This seems like offering a reward for dishonesty, a bribe for falsehood, and is in direct opposition to the teachings of Christ, for he teaches us that he is unhappy in life if he is unfaithful in much. And those who are faithful over few things, makes rulers over many things.

Another objection to the old system and an argument in favor of the new, is that agents hire teachers at a venture, and have them examined afterwards. They are said to be particularly shrewd in purchasing a horse, but very simple in selecting a school teacher. It is true that agents sometimes hire teachers before sending them to the committee for examination, but it is well understood by both parties that the endorsement of the committee is necessary to make the contract valid. But it is not often that agents hire teachers without some previous knowledge of their qualifications.

Sec. 8. Provides for the transaction of the business of state, in such a way as to insure public and impartial trial of causes. Directors shall report annually to the Secretary of State.

Sec. 9. Property of railroads shall be considered personal property and liable to taxation.

Sec. 10. No stock dividends and other fictions of the capital stock or indebtedness, shall be paid. No increase of capital stock without sixty days public notice.

Sec. 11. Legislature to prevent abuses and extortion on the part of railroads.

Article XVI.

Judges of inferior courts required to report any defects in the law to the Supreme Court, and the Judges of the Supreme Court to report on same to the Governor, annually.

Our first impression on reading the text of the proposed amendments, was that while some were of vital importance, the greater part were entirely unnecessary, and would only encumber the constitution with matter that might as well be embodied in the laws by the legislature; but a more careful examination of them, and a comparison of the constitution, it is, compels us to modify our opinion. We hardly approve the thirteenth article, and section six of the fourteenth. The other sections of the fourteenth article appear to be wise, with the exception of that about lotteries, the necessity or propriety of which we question, and the section about the pay of the legislature, the need of which is not quite evident. The fifteenth article deals with a difficult subject—that of corporations; and on a slight consideration of the matters comprised in the different sections, we are not able to form a decided opinion on all of them. Section one, however, comends itself at once.

We should not think it wise to commit all these important matters to the consideration of the present legislature, elected, as it has been, in the ordinary way, without much care to select the ablest men, and assembling, as it has, with the expectation of a short session. Experience shows that the submission of such matters to the popular vote amounts to very little, although this may be valuable as a precautionary measure. Altogether, we are inclined to believe that a convention is the better mode—a convention composed of the highest wisdom of the state, assembled for the single purpose of considering the amendment of the organic law. But there is at present no mode in which a convention can be lawfully called for such a purpose. The constitution provides for amendment in only one method, namely, that the legislature may by a two-thirds vote propose amendments to be submitted to the people at the annual election. It will therefore be first necessary to obtain by this method a preliminary amendment, so that a convention can be called; to consider the Morris amendments or any others that may be submitted. The delay thus occasioned will give an opportunity for the formation of opinions on the measures proposed, and will be rather advantageous than otherwise.

There are two amendments that ought to be made that are not proposed by Mr. Morris.

The first is the substitution of biennial for annual elections and sessions of legislature; the second is a prohibition of grants to institutions of learning such as colleges and academies under the immediate control and patronage of the state, with a grant of power to the legislature to appropriate money to the use of common schools.

As the present constitution has already been extensively amended, and was, perhaps, originally somewhat faulty in arrangement and direction, there is strong reason for desiring a new draft. Whatever course is taken we trust nothing will be done precipitately.

Five thousand bushels of potatoes are reported sold by farmers in Winterville during the past week at 50 cents to \$1 per bushel.

Our Fishermen Seized.

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries of the Dominion of Canada, gives, under the date of Dec. 30, a statement of seizures of American vessels by the British and Canadian cruisers for violation of the fishery and revenue laws during 1870. From this statement it appears that tea vessels were seized for illegal fishing, one for smuggling, and one for violating "the merchant's shipping act". Of the ten vessels seized for illegal fishing, 7 were caught in the act, against two there was evidence that they had offended, and the remaining one was preparing to fish; six of these vessels had been previously warned, and two of the remaining three acknowledged their guilt.

If the facts are as alleged by the Canadian power, we have no ground for complaint, unless in the case of the White Prawn, seized Nov. 25, at Head Harbor, Campbell, N. B., in whose case it might perhaps be pleaded that the offence was committed in ignorance. Even this plea would hardly be valid, since we must own that it was the business of the fishermen to inform themselves as to the law. To warn them would be an act of cruelty on the part of the Canadian government, but the offenders could have no right to a warning. With this exception, all the vessels seized for illegal fishing had either been warned or owned that they transgressed knowingly. All these offences were committed at sea where the United States makes no claim of a right to fish. It would seem that the infringement of our legal rights has been carefully avoided.

It is possible that facts not yet brought to our knowledge will put a different phase on some of these seizures, but we fear that our fishermen have merited their bad fortune. Those who are acquainted with the manner in which fishermen from other States obey the laws on our coast would readily believe that the laws of Canada would not be very scrupulous.

The School Agent's View. Our correspondent "School Agent," whose letter appears in another column, under the heading "Examine Both Sides," entitles some of our arguments on the teacher law with Mr. Dewberry's. We did not say that Agents were "often men who took no interest at all, or at least but very little, in the schools," and unless Mr. Dewberry's experience is unlike our own, he would say on this subject that is the case sometimes, but not often. We hardly see how our correspondent can really believe that agents "are as cheaply as possible?" This is more likely to be true of district agents than school committees? That their ruling motive is to hire a teacher, and that their ruling motive is to be the less expensive of a neighboring State. It may be confessed however, that our legislature, following the lead of the new school law, has provided for the hiring of teachers from district agents to school committees, the incapacity of agents to select suitable teachers for their respective schools. Allow me here to make a few extracts from the articles in question. The agent was not often qualified to judge of the fitness of the candidates for the position of teacher, and was quite liable to select the poorest, last, and best of the best. His ruling motive was too often simply to get a teacher as cheaply as possible. Often the agents were men who took no interest at all, or at least but very little, in the schools.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY. The annual meeting of the State Agricultural Society was held in the agricultural room at the State House, on Wednesday, Jan. 18, 1871. The President, Hon. Seth Scammon, in the chair.

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